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## **Grand Canyon News Release**

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### **Tribal consultation river trip to take place at Grand Canyon National Park**

**Grand Canyon, Ariz.** - From August 20-28, 2007, the National Park Service (NPS) and the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) will be leading a tribal consultation river trip along the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon.

The purpose of this trip is for the NPS and the Reclamation to consult with affiliated tribes about various river-related issues within the park – specifically implementation of the Colorado River Management Plan (CRMP), development of the upcoming Resource Stewardship/Backcountry Management Plan, and implementation of an archaeological treatment plan for 151 sites affected by Glen Canyon Dam.

The integrity and stability of these 151 sites have been affected by Glen Canyon Dam, natural processes and visitor use. Glen Canyon Dam itself has greatly reduced the amount of sediment suspended in the Colorado River and deposited on terraces along the river. Due to continual sediment depletion over the past 30+ years of dam operations, these sites have been cut by small drainages, leading to artifacts and masonry walls tumbling into them. There has also been the widespread exposure of archaeological remains as sand is carried away and these remains are exposed to the elements and human activity.

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The NPS and Reclamation are in the process of developing a treatment plan for these 151 sites, and they want the tribes' recommendations. Possible treatments that could be taken include full excavation, partial excavation, monitoring, revegetation or no action.

"It is important that federal agencies gather tribal perspectives on how we treat their ancestral homelands," said Grand Canyon National Park's Chief of Cultural Resources Jan Balsom.

"These consultations help the National Park Service to better manage Grand Canyon National Park and preserve this landscape's heritage."

There are 11 tribes who have ancestral ties to the Grand Canyon. In addition to representatives from the NPS and Reclamation, representatives from the Las Vegas Band of Paiute Indians, the Pueblo of Zuni, the Moapa Paiute Tribe, the Kaibab Band of Paiute Indians, the Navajo Nation, the Hualapai Tribe, the Hopi Tribe, and the Yavapai/Apache Nation will be in attendance on this river trip. The NPS has been consulting with area tribes on river-related issues since 1990. The last tribal consultation river trip took place two years ago.

"Tribal consultation is an ongoing process and relationship," said Balsom. "Doing consultations like this river trip helps the National Park Service to build better relations with area tribes. We become better neighbors and stewards."

In cooperation with archaeologists from the Museum of Northern Arizona (MNA), archaeologists from the Grand Canyon are currently excavating nine archaeological sites that are most threatened by dam operations. Over the next five years, archaeologists will complete site testing, excavation, stabilization and interpretation for park visitors. Both the NPS and MNA hope the excavations of these nine sites will shed some light on the Grand Canyon's rich prehistory.

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